



National Provider Identifier

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N e w s l e t t e r



The National Provider Identifier effective date is May 23, 2005!!!! Learn what you need to do to be prepared....

The Department of Health and Human Services adopted the Final Rule for the National Provider Identifier (NPI) as a standard unique identifier for health care providers on

January 23, 2004. This rule becomes effective May 23, 2005. The compliance date for the U.S. healthcare industry (except for small health plans) is May 23, 2007. After this date, the NPI must be used to identify providers in all HIPAA electronic transactions. The goal of the NPI is to simplify the administration of the health care system and enable efficient electronic transmission of health information.

Who needs to get an NPI?

On January 26, 2005, Dr. Winkenwerder signed the HIPAA National Provider Identifier (NPI) Enumeration Policy for the Military Health System (MHS) Individual Health Care Providers. This policy **requires** certain MHS providers to obtain an NPI, including health care providers who furnish billable healthcare services or those who may initiate and/or receive referrals. In the MHS, this affects the following types of providers: **All Privileged Health Care Providers, Some Independent Duty Medical Technicians, Independent Duty Corpsmen, and Nurses** who request referrals or at times provide billable services. For example, a nurse giving a Depo-Provera injection when the patient has not seen the physician would need to be identified in certain HIPAA transactions and therefore, would need an NPI.

Why is the NPI important to me as an individual provider?

The adoption of the NPI will eliminate the need for individual health care providers to have multiple identifiers for use when conducting HIPAA electronic transactions. This simplifies the administration of healthcare for providers, payers and claims processors, while decreasing the risk of Social Security Numbers being used fraudulently. When MHS providers transition into the civilian sector, they will need to use the same NPI upon submitting electronic claims, referrals and writing prescriptions.

How will compliance with the NPI requirements benefit the Military Health System?

Use of the NPI to identify health care providers in HIPAA electronic transactions will help make billing and referrals more efficient resulting in time and cost savings for the Military Health System.

Where can Providers Find More Information?

Please watch for guidance through your Surgeon General's Office prior to the effective date of the NPI Final Rule (May 23, 2005).

The TRICARE Office of HIPAA Electronic Standards has made several documents available online to provide additional information to providers. These materials include Fact Sheets, FAQs, and several poster designs. The posters can be sent to printers to produce larger images or simply be printed to distribute or post on a bulletin board. All materials can be found at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/hipaa/identifiers.html>.

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